

What services are being offered?

The Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO) is a statewide agency of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. RICO enforces the regulatory standards of over forty professions, occupations, and programs by receiving, investigating, and prosecuting consumer complaints.

How does filing a complaint help me?

Filing a complaint may lead to resolution of your complaint. Please keep in mind that RICO takes action against the respondent, on behalf of the State of Hawaii, therefore, filing a complaint may not necessarily assist you with what you are seeking.

Does it cost anything to file a complaint?

There is no fee to file a complaint. However, you may incur incidental expenses such as copying fees.

What kind of complaints can I file?

RICO takes complaints involving the professions, occupations, and programs it regulates. Typical complaints RICO investigates and prosecutes are misrepresentation, poor workmanship, negligence in the practice of the professions, and unlicensed activity.

For instance, RICO may investigate if a contractor fails to complete a job or an auto repair dealer fails to properly repair your car. RICO does not take action in areas such as employer/employee relations, contractual disputes, billing disputes, and personality conflicts.

Is there a time limit for filing a complaint?

There is no time limit for filing a complaint. However, it is best to file your complaint as soon as possible, as the elapsed time may make the investigation of your complaint more difficult.

What do I have to do to file a complaint? What is my role in the complaint filing process?

You need to obtain a complaint form by writing, calling, or personally coming into the nearest RICO office. Each office is authorized to accept written complaints. Oral complaints will not be accepted.

You need to provide copies of documentation/evidence to support your allegations. Please do not submit original documents.

Should the case proceed to a hearing, you may be called upon to testify as a witness.

Complaints may be filed anonymously, however, you will not be privy to the investigation findings.

Do I need an attorney?

You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with RICO. However, if you are considering taking civil action against the respondent, you should consult your private attorney as soon as possible.

What happens after I file my complaint?

You may be contacted by an investigator for additional information and you may be requested to provide additional documentation. You will be notified of what type of action RICO will be taking on your complaint.

Does RICO represent me?

RICO does not represent you. We take action against the respondent on behalf of the State and the general public. You need to consult your own attorney for legal advice.

Can I get any money back by filing a complaint?

There is no guarantee that you will get any money back by filing a complaint with RICO. Therefore, you are encouraged to consult your own attorney to determine whether you should bring a private legal action.

What kind of penalties may be imposed?

Civil or administrative penalties may be imposed on a respondent, ranging from a fine, or suspension or revocation of a license, or an injunction against the unlicensed person/entity. Although restitution may be requested, there is no guarantee that it will be received. RICO does not have criminal jurisdiction.

Is my complaint public record?

RICO files are not available to the public, including the parties to the complaint. Upon inquiry, RICO will disclose basic information about cases alleging licensing law violations. This information includes the respondent's name, allegation(s) and disposition.

RESOURCES

HONOLULU OFFICE

Leiopapa A Kamehameha Building
235 South Beretania Street, 9th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

Complaints History.....587-3222 (Consumer Resource Center)

To call Honolulu numbers from the Neighbor Islands, dial Kauai 274-3141, Maui 984-2400, the Big Island 974-4000, Lanai/Molokai 1-800-468-4644, then dial the last five digits of the state phone number you want to call, then press the # sign.

Complaints History on the Internet:
www.ehawaii.gov/org/serv/cms

Filing a Complaint.....587-3222 (Consumer Resource Center)
(Neighbor Islands, repeat the same process as instructed above.)

MAUI OFFICE.....243-5808

1063 Lower Main Street, Suite C-216
Wailuku, HI 96793

KAUAI OFFICE.....274-3200

3060 Eiwa Street #204
Lihue, HI 96766

HILO OFFICE.....933-8846

345 Kekuanaoa Street #12
Hilo, HI 96720

KONA OFFICE.....322-1908

78-6831 Alii Drive, Suite 134A
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

RICO website: www.hawaii.gov/dcca/rico
RICO e-mail: rico@dcca.hawaii.gov

Business Name Search:
<http://www.ehawaii.gov/org/DCCA/biz-name>

Licensing Search: <http://www.ehawaii.gov/org/serv/pvl>

RICO'S AREAS OF JURISDICTION

Accountancy
Activity Desks and Providers
Acupuncture
Barbering & Cosmetology
Boxing
Cemetery and Funeral Trusts
Chiropractic
Collection Agencies
Commercial Employment Agencies
Condominium Management
& Governance
Contractors
Dentists & Dental Hygienists
Detective and Guards
Dispensing Opticians
Electricians and Plumbers
Electrology
Elevator Mechanics
Engineers, Architects, Land Surveyors
& Landscape Architects
Hearing Aid Dealers and Fitters
Marriage & Family Therapists
Massage Therapy
Medicine and Surgery
Mental Health Counselor
Mortgage Brokers and Solicitors
Motor Vehicle Industry
Motor Vehicle Repair Industry
Naturopathy
Nursing
Nursing Home Administrators
Occupational Therapist
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pest Control Operators
Pharmacy
Physical Therapists
Port Pilots
Psychology
Real Estate Appraisers
Real Estate
Social Workers
Speech Pathologists and Audiologists
Subdivision
Time Share
Travel Agencies
Veterinary Medicine

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMPLAINTS OFFICE

